The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן כ"ה סעיף ה'

Overview

Siman 25 Seif 5:

One should have in mind when putting on *tefillin* that Hashem commanded us to put these four paragraphs that contain the unification of Hashem's name and the exodus on our arms, near the heart and on our heads, near the brain so that we should remember the miracles and wonders. They also indicate His unity, power and dominion over the upper and lower worlds to do as He wishes. One should submit his *neshama* and desires to the will of Hashem in order to recall the Creator and limit one's pleasures. The *shel yad* is put on first preceded by the *beracha* להניח תפילין and then the *shel rosh* which is put on without a *beracha* since one *beracha* covers them both. According to others one should recite the *beracha* על מצות תפילין before putting on the *shel rosh* even if there was no interruption. (This is the custom that spread amongst *Ashkenazim* to recite two *berachos*. It is correct to say after the second *beracha* ברוך שם כבוד וכו'.)

- Bach points out that the primary fulfillment is one's intent to fulfill the mitzvah but *b'dieved* the *mitzvah* is fulfilled even without this intent. (M.B. 15)
- Some have the custom to read קדש and והיה כי יביאך after putting on their *tefillin* and all four *parshiyos* of *tefillin* after putting on Rabbeinu Tam's *tefillin*. (M.B. 16)
- The ו"י of the word מצות is read with a "*pasach*" rather than a "*cholom*." (M.B. 20)
- ברוך שם כבוד וכו' should not be recited until after one has tightened his *shel rosh* in place because if it is said before that it constitutes an interruption between the *beracha* and the fulfillment of the *mitzvah* which would necessitate repeating the *beracha*. (M.B. 21)

Stories to Share

Prior Possession

ש"ע כ"ה, ה' "וישתבד להקדוש ברוך הוא הנשמה שהיא במח והלב..."

A certain chassid brought his son to Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Riminov, zt"l, to put tefillin on the bar mitzvah boy for the first time. The Riminover opened a siddur with the young man and said the l'shem yichud with him word for word. Immediately after they said the words,"לשעבד בזה תאוות ומחשבות לבנו לעבודתו יתברך שמו"- to subdue and direct the desires and thoughts of our hearts to Hashem's service with this," the Rebbe asked the boy, "Do you know what these words mean?"

After pausing for just an instant, the Rebbe explained, "We find in Bava Metzia 12 that when someone loans his friend money, this creates a lien on all of the borrower's property. No one can do anything to remove the lender's right to collect on his loan from the property. This statement is precisely the same. From the moment we 'subdue and direct' ourselves—literally, place a lien on ourselves—to Hashem and His avodah, we deprive any internal or external force of evil to get anything out of us. We have already declared that Hashem has a lien on us!"

בארת מהים השלם, ע' קכ"ו

Once, when Rav Yissachar Dov of Belz, zt"l, put tefillin on a bar mitzvah boy he said the same thing but added a further explanation. "We find that everyone has a thought of sin each day and if not for the fact that Hashems saves us, we would fall into the hands of the evil inclination. When a person wakes up in the morning and dedicates his every feeling to Hashem, even if the yetzer hara sends illicit thoughts meant to cause him to stumble, Hashem says, 'My lien was placed on him first!'"

נטעי גבריאל, הל' בר מצוה, פתיחה, ע' ל"ט

Halacha Highlight

The two berachos recited by Ashkenazim on *tefillin*

Rema Siman 25 Seif 5

וכן פשט המנהג בבני אשכנז שמברכין שתי ברכות

And this custom spread amongst Ashkenazim to recite two *berachos*

Taz (סק"ו) quotes his brother known as Mahari HaLevi who asserts that the *shel rosh* and the *shel yad* are two independent mitzvos. In theory one should recite two *berachos*, להניח תפילין and על מצות תפילין for each *mitzvah*. However, rather than recite the two *berachos* for each, Chazal mandates that one should put on his *shel yad* and *shel rosh* one after the other so that he could make only two berachos and each beracha will be applied to each mitzvah. This approach could be traced back to Rosh (פ"ק דפסחים סי' י') who also writes that Chazal should have enacted two berachos for each tefilah (singular of tefillin) but they did not want to enact the recitation of the same two berachos for two similar mitzvos.

Based on this approach, Mahari HaLevi asserts that the word מצות from the phrase על מצות תפילין should be read with a "cholom" rather than with a "pasach." The difference between a "cholom" and a "pasach" is that the "cholom" makes the word plural. In other words we would be thanking Hashem for sanctifying us with the mitzvos of tefillin, i.e. the *shel yad* and the *shel rosh*. Although the *beracha* is recited after the *shel yad* is already in place, nevertheless, it still applies to the *shel yad*. Mishnah Berurah (סק"כ) disagrees and writes that the word should be read with a "pasach" which is singular, meaning the mitzvah of tefillin. He contends that the beracha was enacted only for the *shel rosh*, therefore the word should be read in the singular.

Aruch HaShulchan (סע' י' וי"ג) writes in the name of the Zohar that the *beracha* of להניח תפילין is the beracha on the mitzvah whereas the beracha of על מצות תפילין is a beracha of praise to Hashem that He has given us this mitzvah to perform.